

older adolescents are not currently available, the SBI plans to acquire those data in the future.

It is seen in Table 8, as expected, that the 1992 arrest rates were generally much higher for older adolescents than for younger; higher for males than for females; and higher for minorities than for whites aged 10-17. The sex and race differentials were slightly greater for more serious (Part 1) offenses than for lesser (Part 2) offenses. However, age differentials were greater for Part 2 offenses. Arrests for fraud, offenses against family, and DWI were especially more likely among older than younger adolescents of both sexes.

Exceptions to the above patterns include excess rates of arson at younger ages (both sexes), motor vehicle theft at younger ages (females only), fraud and embezzlement among females (ages 18-19), and DWI and liquor law violations among whites (ages 10-17). An interesting observation is the almost identical male and female prostitution rates at both younger (10-17) and older (18-19) ages.

The race and sex differentials in murder arrests are highly notable. However, the reader should be aware here as elsewhere that low rates are based on small numbers of arrests and may not be reliable. The race and sex differentials observed in drug arrest rates are probably more stable.

Incarcerations

Between 1984 and 1992, the largest increase in statewide incarceration rates occurred among persons 18-19 years old. That 56 percent increase was twice the next highest increases of 28 percent at ages 35-39 and 40-44. At 16-17 years old, the 8-year increase was 25 percent.

Using counts provided by the Department of Correction, Table 9 examines the state's 1992 adolescent incarceration rates (state prison inmates per 100,000 population) by age and those percent

changes since 1984 (earliest year available). While the rate for misdemeanors has declined by nearly three-quarters, the rate for felonies has risen 79 and 106 percent at ages 16-17 and 18-19 respectively. Particularly large increases involve homicide, robbery, and drug violations for both age groups. Notice that the 1992 rate for drug violations among youth aged 18-19 was nearly *15 times* its 1984 level. The increase was even greater among persons 16-17 years old whose rate was zero in 1984. At least part of the increase is due to increased law enforcement emphasis on drug activity.

According to a source at the Department of Correction,¹⁴ the large decrease in the misdemeanor incarceration rate is largely an artifact of the 1987 law setting limits on the number of persons incarcerated. The law was implemented by releasing most misdemeanants soon after admission, thereby reducing the misdemeanor population by one-half.¹⁴ Due to repeat offenses by early parolees, this law may also account for some of the increase in felony incarceration rates.

Violence and Safety at School

Twenty-seven percent of all 9th-12th grade students reported carrying a weapon (gun, knife, club) in the month prior to the 1993 YRBS. Compared to results obtained in a limited YRBS conducted in 1990, the percentages of 9th and 12th grade males who carried *guns* more than doubled over the last three years. The 1993 survey was conducted prior to the 1993 legislation making the possession of a gun at school a felony violation.

Other highlights of the 1993 YRBS include these about violence and safety at school:

- Nearly 40 percent of students were involved in a physical fight in the previous year; 15 percent reported fighting on school property.
- Thirty-five percent reported that some personal property had been stolen or deliberately damaged on school property during the past year.